2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

177 a table, *ostuol*, shows its origin from the Russian word for table, *stol*.
352 In ancient times, the Yakut used tables without legs, or boards, which were called *sandaly*. These were placed on the floor before the visitors or on the bank between them.

● 354 The fireplace (*osox*, or *kömülüök*, from the Russian, *kamelek*, No. 9) is situated in the northeastern corner of the dwelling; its front part faces the dividing line between the male and female halves of the house. The hearth, quadratic in form, consists of a wooden trough made of logs or heavy boards, and lined with beaten clay. The length of the sides of the trough is about 5 feet and the height about 11 inches. The chimney, open in front and sloping backward somewhat, consists of poles, tied with twigs at the top, over the roof, and coated inside with clay. The mistress of the house is the chief guardian of the hearth which is the family protector. She alone is privileged to pass in front of it; all the other women must go around back of it. If the master of the house or an honorary guest stands in front of the hearth, the mistress too must pass behind it. During her menstrual period a woman is not allowed to touch the fire or to approach the hearth. A woman lying-in and her midwife may not enter the part of the house lighted by the flame of the hearth. A bride entering the house of her husband must throw a few little sticks into the fire and make a libation of melted butter. After these, she becomes a member of the family. It seems that the throwing of little sticks is symbolic of making fire, the task of a woman member of the family. A photograph of the Yakut hearth (Fig. 52) may be seen in the chapter on pottery.

Fig. 21 (70-9284, 9281). Model of a Table and a Chair.

562 841 844 585 354

342 171 Fig. 22 shows the exterior of the Yakut earth hut. When built separately from the earth hut for cattle, it has the form of a truncated pyramid, but in the illustration the two structures are combined. The cattle stable has an exit door to the yard, but there is also an inside door leading from the dwelling to the cattle stable (Fig. 19). The Russians call the Yakut earth hut, *yourta*, a name given to all types of native dwellings whether tents or permanent huts. The Yakut themselves call their earth hut, *balahan*, a name used also by the Mongoloid peoples of Siberia. There is a winter earth hut (*kystyk balahan*) and a summer earth hut (*sayylyk balahan*) which do not differ. The summer hut is

2; Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

342 and shut out mosquitoes. We may assume that this kind of dwelling was invented by the Yakut after their arrival in their present territory from a more southerly habitat. Indeed, the present Yakut dwelling is far more fitted to the harsh sub-polar or polar climate than any type of tent.

[177] When living near cities or Russian settlements, the Yakut abandon their earth huts and live in log houses of the Russian type. Fig. 23 illustrates a log house of a rich Yakut elder on the Lena River not far from the City of Yakutsk.

As a summer dwelling, the ancient Yakut used a conical tent covered with birchbark (Fig. 24). It differs from other types of birchbark tents in size and in the heavy and solid construction of the wooden frame, so that it cannot be easily transported. These large tent-like dwellings

413

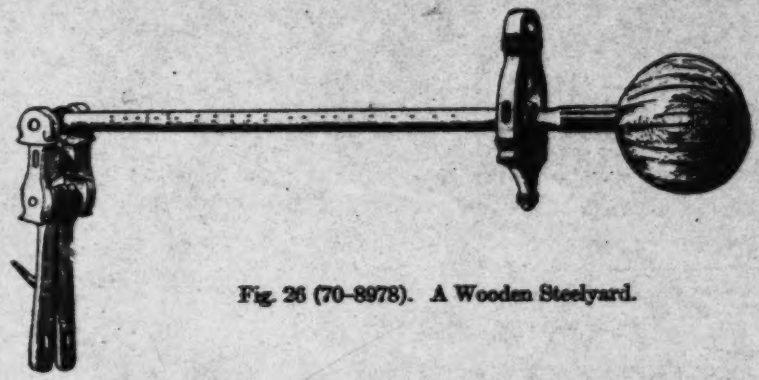

Fig. 26 (70-8978). A Wooden Steelyard.

were located far from the winter earth huts of the Yakut and were occupied during the summer so that the horses and cattle might not injure the meadows on which hay is grown for the winter and near which the winter dwellings are situated.

354 The fireplace of the birchbark tent is constructed like the hearth of the earth hut, i.e., it is a large wooden bottomless box filled with beaten clay. The only difference is that in the tent the fireplace is situated in the center under the opening in the top and has no chimney. This type of dwelling is no longer used, though twenty-five years ago it was occa-
353 sionally observed. The tent was ornamented with engravings, wood, and birchbark carvings, sinew and horsehair embroidery, and with slivers of colored mica and pieces of bright cloth.

342 [177] In some districts a polygonal sloping-roofed blockhouse (Fig. 25) was used instead of the conical tent. The author saw such blockhouses

10: Bush--173-174 T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut-1-2
116, 342, 354

"The storehouses and stables about the settlement were ordinary log buildings, but the inhabited yourts more resembled mounds of clay on the exterior than dwellings. Solavsoff immediately conducted us to his yourt upon dismounting from our deer. We entered by a small leaning door lined with deerskins into an apartment about twenty feet square. After the usual plan of the Yakouts, the house was built of small split logs standing upon end instead of lying horizontally and sloping inward toward the top like the sides of a Mississippi River iron-clad. It was also roofed with split logs, supported by heavy posts, and the whole banked over on the outside with clay for warmth. Two small apertures a foot or two square, in each wall, admitted light. Some of these were glazed with fragments of glass obtained from whalers, but, for the most part, tranlucent fish-skins sewed together, or cakes of transparent ice, served as a substitute. These last are secured in place by a mixture of snow and water used as mortar, which freezes upon application, and remains perfectly solid during the long, cold winters. Ice windows will often last for months. The temperature inside the hut during the daytime is rarely warm enough to thaw them, and at night a stuffed deerskin pillow is thrust into each aperture as a protection from the hot breath of the numerous sleepers inside." [174]

The feature of a Yakout yourt is the chual, or fireplace. This stands in one corner, out from the walls of the apartment, facing diagonally across the room. The chimney and fireplace are all one, built of long light poles bound together with wisps in the proper shape, and then plastered over with several layers of clay, each layer being carefully

10: Bush--173-174 T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut-Z
116, 342, 354

baked and hardened before a fresh one is applied. They are broad and concave, so that the heat and light are reflected to all parts of the room, and, besides, are so massive as to retain warmth for many hours."

11: Lansdell--300 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 231, 342, 354

"The winter dwellings of the people have doors of raw hides, and log or wicker walls calked with cow-dung, and flanked with banks of earth to the height of the windows. The latter are made of sheets of ice, kept in their place from the outside by a slanting pole, the lower end of which is fixed in the ground. They are rendered air-tight by pouring on water, which quickly freezes round the edges; and the fact that it takes a long time to melt these blocks of ice thus fixed is highly suggestive of what the temperature must be, both without and within. The flat roof is covered with earth, and over the door, facing the east, the boards project, making a covered place in front, like the natives' houses in the Caucasus. Under the same roof are the winter shelters for the cows and for the people, the former being the larger. The fireplace consists of a wicker frame plastered over with clay, room being left for a man to pass between the fireplace and the wall. The hearth is made of beaten earth, and on it there is at all times a blazing fire, and logs of larchwood throw up showers of sparks to the roof. Young calves, like children, are often brought into the house to the fire, whilst their mothers cast a contented look through the open door at the back of the fireplace. Behind the fireplace, too, are the sleeping-places of the people, which in the poorer dwellings consist only of a continuation of the straw laid in the cow-house."

12: Galitzin -- 145 [2] N-2 (no date) 1853 Yakut
116, 342, 354

"The winter's yourtes of the Yacoutes have the form of truncated pyramids. They are square. To construct them, they make use of poles fixed in the ground in an inclined position, and they spread on them a mixture of dung and soil. The roof is flat, and made with planks of birch--tree's bark, which possesses the property of being almost inaccessible to rottenness. Seldom any floor is to be found. The hearth, or tchouval, occupies the centre: above there is a chimney made with planking laid on with clay. This dwelling, however light be its construction, is sufficiently warm to be able to live in it in the winter season; besides, it offers the advantage of being constantly ventilated by means of the hearth, which being always lighted, purifies the air. During the summer months the Yacoutes construct for their use temporary yourtes without hearth in the localities to which they remove in the hay-harvest season."

17: Erman--264-265 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 171, 197, 354

"Many of the Yakutian words, written from the lips of this man, [RCH: an old Yakut at Delgeisk] showed no essential agreement with the equivalent terms of the Sabaikalian Buraets, as given by Mitlèyev. On the other hand, I remarked in the yurts here many remarkable resemblances to the manners of the Ostyaks on the Obi. Thus the fire-place, the most important part of all northern dwellings, is constructed by both tribes after the same idea, for it consists here, as on the Obi, of a wicker frame plastered over with clay. The only difference is in the position of the apparatus, for the back of the fire-place is placed by the Ostyaks close to the wall of the house, whereas the Yakuts always leave room for a man to pass between their fire-place and the wall. The flue is therefore perpendicular in the yurts on the Obi, whereas in those of the Yakuts here they lean backwards, at an angle of 30°, so as to form a continuation of the burning logs, which are placed in a similarly oblique position, resting below on the bottom of the fire-place, and above, on the mouth of the flue. This deviation from the Ostyak mode of construction is evidently advantageous, for here, the moment the fire is kindled, a strong and audible [265] draught is perceptible, with a bright flame; but in the yurts on the Obi there is more frequently pungent smoke with a dull fire."

17: Erman--269 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut-1-2
116, 342, 171, 354, 372

"The Yakuts in Namana, and along the road onward for 110 versts, as far as Sanayakhtàtsk, live still quite in their ancient, original fashion. Again, I found their yurts exactly like those of the Ostyaks; they are rectangular, flat-roofed, and fitted inside with what are here called narui, that is, raised and divided berths along the walls. The thick flakes of ice, which serve as window panes, were here also held against the wall from the outside, by a slanting pole, the lower end of which was fixed in the ground. In the night, when the fire goes out, this ice is covered, like glass, with an opaque and snow-like hoar-frost, which, in the daytime melts away, as well as a considerable portion of the ice itself, from the heat of the yurt, and the flakes, which are, at first, a foot thick, require to be renewed four or five times in the course of the winter; a provision of suitable ice always lying before the yurt. The parts of these dwellings which are directly heated by the fire, attain a temperature of +15° or +20° R. (1) We found the

1. It may be assumed that, of the heat proceeding from the fire-place, there is as much expended on the flake of ice as passes, on an average, through an equal area of the wooden wall. In a cubical yurt of 15 feet, the melting, in succession, of four flakes of ice a foot thick, shows that the whole amount of heat in 170 winter's days, would suffice to melt 5400 cubic feet of ice. The quantity of fuel required for this would amount, according to Rumford's experiments, if applied most advantageously,

> to 231 cubic feet of wood in the course of the winter, or about 87 pounds a day. The daily supply which lies near the fire-place in the Yakutian yurts seems not to exceed this.

children in them, of both sexes, quite naked; they were, nevertheless, running about in this state to-day, when the thermometer was as low as —10° R., and even in the open air."

24: Wrangell--38 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 222, 342, 354, 356

"The Jakutian habitations are of two kinds. In summer they dwell in what they call urossy, which are light circular tents formed of poles and covered with birch-bark, which they strip from the trees in large pieces. These are first softened by boiling, and then sewed together; and the outside of the urossy, from the colour of the bark being white,, have a very pleasing appearance, and at a distance resemble large canvass tents. In the summer they wander about with these in search of the finest pastures; and while their cattle are feeding, they themselves are incessantly employed in collecting the requisite store of winter forage.

At the approach of that season they take possession of their warm jurti. These are cottages formed of thin boards in the shape of a truncated pyramid, and covered thickly on the outside with sticks, grass, and mud. A couple of small opening, which admit a scanty light, are closed in winter with plates of ice, and in summer with fish-membrane or oiled paper. The floor is generally of beaten mud, and is sunk two or three feet below the surface of the ground; but people in better circumstances have it raised and boarded. There are wide permanent benches round the walls, which serve for seats in the daytime, and for sleeping on at night; and they are generally partitioned off for this purpose, according to the number of occupants. In the middle, but rather nearest the door, is the tschuwal, a kind of open hearth with a chimney up to the roof, where a fire is constantly kept burning. Clothing, arms, and a few household articles hang round the walls, but in general the greatest disorder and want of cleanliness prevail."

24: Wrangell--39 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 177, 342, 354

"The above-described habitations [RCH: the Yakutian yourts or jurti; see category 116, p. 38], though rude, are better adapted to the wants of the people than those built after the Russian fashion, a few of which are to be seen. In the construction of the jurti small trees may be used instead of boards, which is a great convenience; while the open fire in the tschuwal, by keeping up a continual change of air, is far more conducive to health than the close stove."

45: Lesseps--302-303 T-2 (1788) 1790 Yakut
116, 342, 354, 592

" The size of these houses [RCH: i.e., Yakut yourts] varies according to the wealth of the proprietor, and the number of his family. Beams, placed by the side of one another, and plaistered with clay, form the walls, which are not like ours, perpendicular. Inclining towards the top, they support a roof, the slope of which is very inconsiderable: in some yourts the roof is supported by posts. The house has but one door, and is divided, as I have already observed, into two apartments. The cleanest is inhabited by the family, who sleep in distinct huts, distributed at equal distances against the walls, and which I can compare to nothing better than the small [303] cabins in Dutch ships: every couple have a hut to themselves. The other part of the yourt is for the cattle, and is nothing more than a stable. In the center of the building is a round chimney made of wood, and guarded from accidents by a thick clay covering. When they light a fire, the wood is placed perpendicularly. Cross beams are occasionally placed in the chimney, upon which they hang their kettles, and these are repeated, in proportion to the number of vessels they have to boil."

46: Cottrell--138 T-2 (1840) 1842 Yakut
116, 221, 262, 342, 354

"They are a more sedentary people than most of their neighbours, and only migrate to find fresh pasture for their cattle once a year. Their summer huts are made of birch bark, of which strips are sewed together with horsehair. In autumn they return to their wooden sheds in the forests adjacent to the meadows where the hay is made and stacked up. These are covered over with a thick coating of cowdung, which keeps them warm, and they are not troubled with the smoke, from having chimneys which carry it away. These are wooden pipes well guarded from the fire by a thick plaster of clay and cowdung. The hut contains one window, always to the right of the entrance, which is filled up with a large block of transparent ice, which they scrape clean from the rime frost which attaches itself to it, when the pipe is stopped up at night. Their usual beverage in summer is the kumysse, made of fermented mares'-milk, which the Kirghis also drink, and their food consists of the thin under skin of the larch or fir boiled with fresh milk or curds. The richer classes eat butter and fat with it; many of them have a hundred cows and horses."

/163 cont./

122 In particular he urged haste, for with the disappearance of the sun at the /164/ beginning of November the most frightful snowstorms customarily set in, which are very dangerous, especially on the tundra.

Unfortunately we did not have much time to converse with him, because night had already fallen and we still had a good stretch to cover to the balagan of the elder. Sachár O'ssipowitsch made us a gift of some fresh white and rye bread and a magnificent fish (néljma), a delicacy missing for a long time; we then left him, after he had most cordially invited us to stay at his house in Ssiktjách upon our return trip, even in his absence.

In the balagan of the elder we were greeted by his wife and given the best places, next to the fire, and the elder could not be talked out of showing us and our men hospitality with fat reindeer meat and frozen milk. The people here obviously had a better way of life than our Tungus friends along the Tunguska, who were certainly not poor.

342 For the first time we found ourselves in a Jakut /Yakut/ balagan and had to admit that in severe cold it was much to be [333] preferred to our light tschum /choom/. Such a balagan, or [335] yurt, also called stan when it is used as a station at the same time, and powárnja, that is, kitchen, by some travelers, is a rectangular hut with garret-shaped, sloping side-walls and a flat roof, made out of tree trunks, which are plastered with clay on the outside and are thickly covered with snow in the winter. Any cracks are carefully plugged up with moss from the inside. [354] The windows consist of thick sheets of ice; in the middle [352] stands a Jakut fireplace (kamelók), likewise made out of clay-plastered logs and around this are a number of sleeping places, that is, simple wooden chests without bottoms, which are filled with stamped-down earth /165/ and therefore provide neither a soft bed nor, since they extend directly to the outer [362] wall, a warm one; there are usually six of them. To be sure, [122] such a balagan still leaves much to be desired; in particular the fireplace usually stands too far from the sleeping places and during the night frightful cold comes in through the wide,

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

people used wooden floors, under Russian influence. The size of the dwelling varied from 5 × 5 to 10 × 10 m, and in height was slightly higher than the head. 342

An essential part of every yurt was the hearth and the benches along the walls, as well as the simple uniform utensils. The hearth (ohokh) was usually built on the right of the entrance, close to the northeast corner. It comprised a low (about 25 cm, rectangular area made of clay inside a log frame; a cylindrical pipe, slanting slightly backwards, made of poles and coated on the inside with a thick layer of clay was built above the hearth; the bottom of the pipe was open at the front and acted as the mouth of the stove, while the top went through the roof and was almost always open (it was usually stuffed with something overnight); in the winter there was always a fire burning in the hearth to warm and illuminate the dwelling. The hearth was well ventilated and gave out a lot of heat as long as it was being fed with fuel, hence it used up a great deal of fuel. 354

The plank benches (oron), which were used for sleeping and sitting, stretched along all the walls, filling the gaps between the vertical columns and the bottom of the slanting wall. The benches were divided into different sections, each with its own name and purpose. The most respected bench was the one on the left of the entrance along the southern wall, from the middle to the corner, opposite the hearth—the so-called billirik; somewhat less honorable was the adjoining bench running from that corner along the western wall—the *бастин уҥа орон* (right-hand front bench); these two benches comprised the corner of honor. To the right was the head of the household's seat (*кэтэҕэрийин*). The other benches on the left-hand side of the dwelling were intended for the young men, for workers and for ordinary male guests; on the right-hand side (towards the hearth) was the female half of the dwelling, where the women of the family and visiting women sat. 352 353

The furnishings in the dwelling consist of a small, round or square wooden table (ostuol) in the corner of honor, and several chairs (olokhmas) with the characteristic shape of a hollow cube with ribs made of flexible rods bent at a right angle and a seat made of a thin board; the furnishings also included various kinds of boxes and chests (made of wood and bound with leather), household utensils and so on; the quantity and quality of all the furnishings depended on the wealth of the householders.

A shed of the same design as the dwelling was usually built onto the northern side for the cattle, often under the same roof, though sometimes divided off from the living quarters by merely a thin wooden partition. There was a door leading from the dwelling to the cattle pen behind the hearth. The pen was built on the northern side so as to save some of the heat, but the close contact of the wintering cattle naturally increased the amount of dirt and made the air in the dwelling worse, where it was stuffy and dirty to begin with. 343

A small awning resembling a porch, and sometimes even a porchway (chaampy, *ҕуҕуо*), was built outside in front of the entrance, particularly by the richer people. 342

The yurt was the ancient winter dwelling of the Yakuts; references to it can be found in 17th-century documents. In the 19th century the yurt also became the normal summer dwelling. The summer camp yurts were constructed in the same way as the winter ones, except for small differences (a light leather door on a frame and so on) and there was no cattle pen. Instead of the latter a summer calf pen (titik) was built

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

354
445
291

Hearth.

somewhere near the yurt, and there were also stalls for cattle, wattle pens for foals and so on. 342

In ancient times, however, the Yakut summer dwelling was different in type and was called the urusa or uraha (this type had practically disappeared by the end of the 19th century). The urasa was a conical construction made of poles covered with birchbark and was fairly spacious (4 to 6 m in diameter). The urasa differed from the conical birchbark chum of the taiga nomads by having a more solid structure; it had a square frame at the top made of beams which were attached to the top ends of four poles serving as the base; the birchbark was sewn together in strips in two layers, neatly and tightly; along the walls on either side were benches almost exactly as in the yurt; the urasa was heated by an open clay raised hearth. In the north this kind of dwelling (which was preserved much longer) was covered with turf instead of birchbark or on top of the birchbark; the rods of the frame in this case were more numerous and closer together. This earthen urasa or kalyman (kholuman) was a sort of intermediate form between the conical chum and the Yakut log dwelling. 342 178 [35]

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

reindeer-breeding collective farms there are now dairy and horse-breeding sections.

The Stalin Even-Yakut collective farm in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy Rayon (formerly known as the Sutanya-Udëran) is successfully developing reindeer-breeding alongside horse-breeding, fishing and hunting. The collective contains more than 17,000 reindeer. In 1955 more than 850 tsentners of such important species of fish as whitefish and baranatka were caught. In 1955, 215,000 rubles worth of furs were delivered to the State. The gross monetary income of this collective farm was 2,430,000 rubles; 1,423,000 rubles were distributed to the collective-farm members for labor units, and for each labor unit the payment was 17 rubles cash, 1.04 kg of meat and 720 g of fish. The monetary income per household averaged 24,000 rubles.

Despite the fact that the chief branches of industry of the northern farms have required periodic migration on the part of the population, all the farms have constructed settlements or collective-farm centers. As an example we can take the settlement of Kolymskaya, the center of the Turvaurgin collective farm. This center contains the headquarters of the farm administration, an incomplete secondary school with boarding facilities, a hospital, a shop, a house of culture with a library, a trading station, a power station, bathhouses, a dairy farm, and 50 standard farmhouses. The farm recently acquired an S30 tractor, a launch and two motorboats. In ethnic composition the Turvaurgin collective farm is multinational and consists of Chukchi, Yukagirs, Yakuts and Evenks.

New Way of Life

A considerable obstacle in the way of the implementation of cultural and public-health program in Yakutiya between 1920 and 1930 was the scattered nature of Yakut settlements due to the ancient occupation of pastoralism. One, two or three yurts together was the predominant type of "settlement." The combining of them into larger units was further required by the everyday farming needs of collective farms.

The construction of settlements under Yakutiyan conditions was a major achievement in socialist reconstruction of the Yakutiyan countryside. It provided an opportunity for installing radio and telephone on the farms and providing them with medical and cultural-educational institutions. In 1950 the construction of settlements in southern Yakutiya was by and large complete. The farm settlements are usually located on elevated riverbanks or by the shores of lakes and consist of several parallel streets. Generally speaking, timber houses rather than yurts are built in these settlements. The center is reserved for the school, collective-farm administrative offices, medical center and club. On many farms yurts are used as work premises. There are quite a few settlements with power stations. In the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon alone there are 14 farm power stations with a total output of more than 510 kilowatts. Radio-relay systems have been installed in many of the new settlements. The farmers live in the settlements when they are not out working.

Although several types of farmhouses have been developed, they are still far from perfect. The rigorous climate makes particular demands upon the housing construction in Yakutiya. Special forms of heating are used in the new houses, such as triple frames—the first frame is a single one, while the second is inserted during the winter and has two panes of

glass, tambours (extra doors with an air lock in between) and zavalinkas (mounds of earth around the house). A common practice is to ice over the house for the winter with a mixture of snow and water. Double ceilings, double floors, horizontal flues and shutters are still used, although rather rarely. The brick or tile stove is sometimes combined with the traditional Yakut fireplace. In many houses there is an extra iron stove in addition to the brick stove.

The internal appearance of dwellings has also changed. The furniture known before to the Yakuts (tables, stools and benches) has become less massive and more varied. We now find bookshelves, chairs, small dressing-tables and mirrors. Factory-made crockery and utensils are encountered in every home. Clocks (including alarm clocks), writing materials, and books have become common, and phonographs are also sometimes found. In most houses the walls are adorned with posters, pictures of Communist Party leaders, photographs, bookshelves, and over the bed there is usually a rug made of skin from the reindeer's head, bead-embroidered saddlecloths, or else the walls are covered with cloth. The windows have curtains.

Tremendous changes have taken place in the way of life of the Yakuts. Many collective farms now have electricity and radio. Clean clothes, hot baths, and attention to their personal appearance are typical of most of the collective-farm members. There has been a change in interests, habits and way of life. The outlook of the population has broadened. Books can now be found in every house. In the settlements people enjoy movies, and attend lectures and discussions in the reading rooms. Young people take part in ski-races, chess and other sporting events. Amateur song and dance groups in the clubs are usually of interest to the whole settlement. The families are no longer isolated and no longer keep to themselves.

A typical innovation for city children is toys, such as figures of horses and cows, rubber dolls, rattles, clockwork trucks, and so on. In addition to these, we commonly find delicately carved wooden animals and tiny bows and arrows. In the schools and boarding facilities children amuse themselves with the most popular table games. In the spring and summer they play various games, including hide-and-seek and blind man's-buff.

A great deal has changed in the Yakut diet, as well.

It should be remembered that before the Revolution Yakutiya was a country of chronic famine. Most of the Yakut population suffered from starvation every year, particularly at the end of the winter and in spring. Bread has now become a normal food not only in the southern but also in the northern areas. Groats and macaroni are now part of the staple diet. The consumption of vegetables and potatoes has also considerably increased.

In many regions the collective farms grow cucumbers, radishes, cabbages, onions and beets. Vegetables are imported in the dehydrated form. Everywhere the population is amply provided with tea, sugar, and tobacco. There are bakeries at trading points in most settlements. Meat and fish are consumed by the Yakuts in large quantities, particularly in the northern regions, where they are the staple diet. In the southern regions an important part of the diet is dairy products. On account of the overall improvement in the living standards of the people, sapwood is no longer consumed as food. Nor do they eat pickled fish any more. Local traditions are still retained in the cooking of dairy products, meat and fish. In the northern regions meat is commonly undercooked. Milk is made into some curious dishes such as suorat, khayakh, chokhoon, кобгур and so forth. In a number of regions reindeer gristle is still eaten in the raw state as a delicacy, and so are the liver and bone marrow of this animal. Many families eat freshly